

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BAGRD, EAGR, EDAP, EEWT, AR

SUBJECT: SOVIET TRADE IN MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS (C-ER-6-59780)

REF: STATE 061402, BUENOS AIRES 4300

1. A SOVIET MISSION OF TWO MEAT TECHNOLOGISTS RECENTLY COMPLETED A TOUR OF SEVERAL ARGENTINE CATTLE SLAUGHTER FACILITIES. ACCORDING TO ONE CONTACT, THE SOVIETS STATED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THEIR TOUR THAT THEY FOUND THE FACILITIES VERY ACCEPTABLE AND THAT FROM A TECHNICAL STAND POINT, THEIR COUNTRY WOULD BE ABLE TO PURCHASE BEEF PRODUCED IN ANY PART OF THE COUNTRY AND WOULD BE ABLE TO PURCHASE BOTH BONELESS AND BONE-IN BEEF AS WELL. THIS LATTER POINT IS SIGNIFICANT TO ARGENTINA SINCE IN THE PAST THE SOVIETS HAVE ONLY PURCHASED BONELESS BEEF. OUR SOURCE, HOWEVER, CAUTIONED THAT NOTHING WAS PUT DOWN ON PAPER AND THAT THE SOVIETS ALWAYS LIKE TO REMAIN FLEXIBLE ON THEIR BUYING STANDARDS.

2. PRESUMABLY, ANOTHER ECONOMIC MISSION WILL NOW COME TO NEGOTIATE ANY ACTUAL BEEF PURCHASES. ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, THE RECENT MISSION WAS TO HAVE INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES FROM A PURCHASING MINISTRY OF AGENCY, BUT THAT THESE PEOPLE HAD "VISA" PROBLEMS.

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3. ALL CONTACTS ARE RELUCTANT TO GUESS HOW MUCH BEEF THE SOVIETS MAYBE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING AND ALSO CLAIM THAT THE AVAILABILITY OF THE MANUFACTURING GRADES OF BEEF THAT THE SOVIETS NORMALLY DESIRE IS LIMITED IN ARGENTINA. ONE CONTACT CALLED THE RECENT PURCHASE BY THE SOVIETS OF AUSTRALIAN BEEF A "JOKE" GIVEN THE PUBLICITY THAT THE AUSTRALIAN MEAT BOARD GAVE IT AS A "HARD EARNED SALE" IN RELATION TO THE LARGE STOCKS OF AUSTRALIAN BEEF ALREADY IN COLD STORAGE AND THE CLAIMED SOVIET IMPORT NEEDS OF 500,000 TO 600,000 TONS OF MEAT THIS YEAR.
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